

into his Haram*. For the Califfs were not then so subject to jealousy as the oriental Princes were afterwards; a passion which has been ever encreasing among the Mussulmen.

One day Jacob having dined with his sovereign, he mounted his horse to return home. He fell, and broke his leg. The Califf being informed of this accident, expressed so much grief on the occasion, was so assiduous and anxious for the recovery of his friend, that he raised the jealousy of all those who had not the good fortune, like Jacob, to please their master. Many of them determined to attempt the ruin of this favourite. They concerted measures to excite suspicions against him in the mind of the Prince: while Jacob's leg was healing he lost the favour and confidence of his master; for, at court, more than at any other place, the absent are always in the wrong.

The Califf had received several informations that Jacob did secret services for the family of the Alides, his rivals and enemies. When his old favourite was recovered, instead of betraying the least suspicion of him he affected to give him fresh testimonies of his confidence. Having one day taken him a part he thus accosted him:—Jacob, I must own my weakness to you, I detest and dread Me-

* The apartment of the women.

hemet

hemet, of the family of the Alides: I durst never venture to banish him from Bagdad.—I must get rid of him.

The favourite represented to his master, that Mehemet, a man without friends, and without credit, was rather an object of pity than revenge.—No matter, replied the Califf, his existence disturbs me, and I sacrifice it to my safety, I dare not bring him to a public execution; that would raise too strong a compassion for his fate.

The care of ridding me of him I trust to you. I have him here; I shall put him into your hands. Consider that the peace of your master's mind depends on you. But so important a service must not want its recompence; I give you the fair slave who supped with us yesterday; and to that present I add twenty thousand pieces of gold.

Jacob answered in terms of gratitude, as he found further remonstrances would be vain. The Califf immediately gave orders that the slave, with the unhappy victim of royal jealousy, should be delivered to him; and that the money, the price of the blood he was to shed, should be paid him.

Jacob, more anxious for Mehemet, than pleased with the possession of the beautiful slave, conducted them both to his palace. He had scarce entered it, when Mehemet, who strongly suspected the Caliph's intention, fell

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